

PERSON CENTRED: HOW PEOPLE SEE AND INTERPRET THE WORLD

AN EXERCISE IN OBSERVATION AND UNDERSTANDING

Today, when you are out interacting with the world, you are going to observe more closely than normal. Hopefully you'll have a few interactions in this day to observe. Perhaps you'll be going to work, or meeting friends and colleagues.

Prepare a notepad and pen, or electronic device if you prefer. After you've had an interaction today, take a few minutes to observe that interaction and answer these questions for each encounter:

VISUAL

- What did the other person(s) look like? Had they taken care of their appearance today - smart, scruffy, wearing make-up, dressed smartly, still in their pyjamas etc.
- What was their range of expression? Were they tense in the face? Were they laughing? Were they grimacing? Were they expressionless? Did they look you in the eye? Or were their eyes anywhere but on you? Perhaps they stared at a phone?
- How did they use their limbs? Were they expressing with their hands? Did they keep them in their pockets? Were they hopping from foot to foot, standing still?
- How did they part company? Did they quickly leave, or slowly? Did they race down the street, or amble away?

RATIONAL

- Think about what you observed. What can you deduce from:
 - Their appearance?
 - Their range of expressions?
 - Their gestures/stance?
 - Their method of departure?
- What do you interpret as their state of mind?
- Do you think they were relaxed, tense, anxious, agitated, angry, happy?
- If you observe a state of mind/disposition, can you link it to what you know about them? Perhaps you know they are struggling financially, or in an unhappy relationship, or perhaps doing very well and apparently have it all? Be a detective and apply your knowledge, write a paragraph on your deductions:



PERSON **CENTRED**: HOW PEOPLE **SEE** AND **INTERPRET** THE **WORLD**

THE HEART

Take a moment to clear your mind, mentally shift your attention out of your head and into your heart. Remind yourself that everyone does their best according to their own limitations, and rarely do we know everything that a person is having to contend with.

- How do you feel that they were?
- Did you feel emotions from them?
- Did they trigger emotions in you?
- If they triggered emotions in you, can you identify what it was that triggered them?
- Once you realise what may have triggered any emotional response in you, can you now feel more compassionately what they may have been feeling?
- If you are still struggling, try imagining the person you observed as their five year old self for a moment, we were all innocent children once! Can you feel something about them now?

Explore any and all of the feelings you can around that interaction and write them down.

Once you've finished take another moment to review how we can 'see' the world:

1. Seeing with Eyes (Physical Sight)

- Without insight or comprehension
- Cannot see, recognise or appreciate truth
- Thea (Greek goddess of sight) - unconsidered observation

2. Seeing through Rational (Academia)

- Truth is limited to personal experience and understanding
- Nothing is true unless it has already been proven
- Theoria (Greek - contemplation) - To observe & rationally explain - diagnosis

3. Seeing with the Heart (Empathic Relatability)

- Looking to understand the presented facts
- Looking to understand the unseen facts
- Open to considering new levels of truth & ideas
- Horao (Greek) - To perceive & accept without bias

Now look back over what you have written. Can you detect any mistakes you might have made in your visual observations? (write them down)

Can you detect any mistakes in your rational observations?

What was the revelation (if any) in your attempt to feel and perceive the interaction?

